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Monday, April 16, 1973  
Denver

MR. NYLAND: So, Denver. It's the first meeting we have had ever, I think, in Denver about Gurdjieff. Of course, you've had many; I understand it is your number 52. So, it's an anniversary. Maybe it's a good thing I came.

We'll talk by means of questions and answers if you like. Because many of you already know about Gurdjieff, have read, and most likely have put enough to practice so that you have questions based on your experience. So who would like to start?

Michael (Norman ~~to~~): I have a question.

MR. NYLAND: Okay.

*that*  
Q: It seems that in many meetings, I've attended, you've asked for questions and I've always felt a little confused because I feel that within myself I have a question. It doesn't manifest itself in a specific way. I have experienced a question and had the experience of a question in me. But when it comes time for meeting, it's difficult to formulate. I feel that if I could find the question, I would have half the answer.

MR. NYLAND: Have you a question now?

Q: That's my question.

MR. NYLAND: Why you don't have it?

Q: Yes:

MR. NYLAND: You ought to use a little help. Write it up when you can have a question when you're not at a meeting. And then at the meeting, you read it. I think in general you're a little afraid of asking a question – in general. Because many times, a question indicates what particular level of a person is. And when you are surrounded by others who also are researchers for the truth, then you don't want to give yourself away, that you are already here on this kind of a path only five inches and the others may be seven inches. I think there is always a little fear of talking about oneself when it has to do with an experience, and the experience becomes sometimes a little private. I think if you look at it much more generally, this question of Work on oneself should apply to many people, and they all start from the very beginning because there is nothing at all that we have as far as Objectivity is concerned. So when you ask a question, it is simply a matter of being on the road towards reaching something and everybody else is exactly in the same boat.

It doesn't really matter. If you want to ask a question and it indicates that you have made some advance, or practiced, that it even then could indicate to others that there is something that you have done. But at what particular place one is in the development of oneself regarding Objectivity, it's very difficult to determine. Because the differences for different people when they start to Work and they start to realize what may be in the way as an obstacle is always very different, and sometimes one obstacle for one person may be reached within a month, and the same kind of an obstacle will be reached within five years for someone else. So there is no reason to have any fear about comparisons.

At the same time, if one wants to ask a question which has to do really with a wish for growth and development, so that what you really want to know is dependent on your state, and there has to be a satisfaction in order to have an answer, you should not pay attention to anyone. The question for oneself is always what is the relationship between that what I want to do and what I start out with, how I consider myself unconscious, and what particular road do I want to

go when I want to reach another kind of a state. And that becomes an important question by itself, because it has to do with one's inner life. And if one considers it really from that standpoint, the question of inner life is more important than the outside outer appearances. And it goes even so far that if I don't try to solve the problems of my inner life, and I stay with the questions only as far as my outer life is concerned, I'm afraid that I may have to come back in order to find out what is my inner life. I mean by that, the opportunity<sup>is</sup> <sup>are</sup> that ~~is~~ given in this lifetime is to find as much as one can about oneself, and that will include what are the potentials of one's inner life. If there is no attention paid to it, I think that a person is missing his goal, and that under the particular arrangement<sup>I think</sup> of the cosmos, such a person will have to come back. And then he has to face exactly the same question.

So if I am really interested, and I understand that I have to Work for a living of my inner life, then I will try to get through with it as fast as I could. And on that basis I don't care at all about what other people think.

That's now as far as the attitude is concerned. The other has to do with a condition of which I am, in which I want to ask a question. And that depends on the clarity which is there as a result of Working and having an experience. If that experience is not fully developed or full grown, as it were, I may have difficulty<sup>is</sup> in formulating something that is still halfway. And I think that is something that applies to all questions. I only ask up to the point as far as my present experience goes, and as far as there is at the present time an explanation and clarity. At that point the question begins. And it has nothing to do anymore with what I know. I only want to find out what I don't know. ~~And that respect everybody is equal.~~ <sup>And that respect everybody is equal.</sup> In that respect, everybody is equal.

Is that question answered?

Q: Yes.

Christine (Beltis??): Mr. Nyland, I would like to ask a question. Christine Beltis speaking. I

would like to know the difference between feeling and emotion.

MR. NYLAND: That's very simple. Emotions are deeper. A feeling is superficial. A feeling concerns only myself, and only a little bit extending to some people who probably are around me, or even some animals. But an emotion starts when I start to include in my feeling not only myself, but other people from the standpoint of forms of life. When I become interested in my life and also see life in other people, I become emotionally involved. And there are different gradations in emotions, because the more I can care for that what is outside of me, and I consider that as a form of life and together with myself belonging to the same kind of a group, then I will have more emotions the more I can include my caring for the forms of life outside of myself. That, you might say, is one level. It includes people I know.

If I want to include people I don't know but who also are forms of life, my emotions go deeper. Although I am concerned with life, I also am concerned for the inability to do anything about it for others. If I hear about Viet Nam, or about the poor people in Calcutta, or an earthquake in (.), whatever it may be, I sympathize and I become emotionally involved with a wish to find out what either can be done, or try to find out the reason why certain things happen.

The third step is different. It starts where the second step stops. It has to do with conditions not only of this world. But, there is – of course it is logical to assume, and maybe later one can prove it – that there is life not only on this earth, and there are forms of life somewhere else in the universe. And now if I become religiously involved in that, I try to personify to some extent such forms of life, and ultimately I dare to use the word "God" for that. And therefore when I include in my emotional concern God himself, then I have the deepest emotion that is available to me. In that sense, one becomes deeply religious about the conditions of life on a universal scale.

You see how puny a little bit of feeling is. All right?

*Mr Nyland: All*

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*Q* All right..Thank you.

*Patricia*

Pat (....): Mr. Nyland, this is ~~Pat~~ ..... speaking. Could you talk to me about acceptance? About wanting to accept myself as I am?

MR. NYLAND: Now that presupposes a little bit that you know really what Work is. I don't know how much you know. And the real knowledge starts from the time that you want to apply what you know in your head, or what you feel. If Work has a certain meaning, and it is not only theoretical or an enjoyment of your brain, or even if it <sup>can</sup> ~~could~~ make you sympathetic towards other people, the real way by which this knowledge should become an understanding is by an application in accordance with certain rules, which are prescribed of what to do with that kind of energy when you are affected by the ideas of Objectivity.

It means, really, that if you consider yourself as you live on Earth a subjective person, and you consider that particular state not <sup>very</sup> ~~particularly~~ desirable, or at least you may have thought about the possibility of being free from the bondage of Earth, so that then you would like to go away from the Earth, as it were, and live in a different sphere where Objectivity is the best word to indicate what is the condition, that even if one does not leave <sup>actually</sup> ~~physically~~ the Earth, it also could mean that one is, as far as development is concerned, sufficiently free from the bondage of the Earth in order to have certain other things develop which then take the upper hand.

I use now different words which perhaps you are not so familiar with. When I say bondage of this Earth, I hope you understand. A person is bound by his personality and the forms of his behavior. He is not a free man in that sense at all, because when he lives, he is constantly reacting to the impression he gets from the outside. And to be free from such impressions would mean that he wouldn't react. And I don't think there is anyone who is not reacting, particularly when you consider the function of the five sense organs.

Now, it is a question for a person to <sup>develop</sup> ~~find out~~ if he can be free from such reactions.

Because the reactions belong to this Earth. And if I want to be free from the bondage of the Earth, I may have to move somewhere else – either physically or psychologically, or in imagination. <sup>A</sup>For that it is necessary to understand what I should have in order to go on that road towards Objectivity. It means, really, that if I consider myself hundred percent subjective, I cannot expect to make anything objective out of myself. I need something for that, and I don't know really where it has to come from. But the fact that I am considering the possibility of such Objectivity existing, it means that I have a thought and I also have a feeling to some extent, and perhaps even a hope that it may be possible for me to reach that kind of a state – if I only can find out what to do and how to do it. For that we have the terminology of Gurdjieff – in the terminology of that, we use the word 'I'.

'I' simply means that there is some kind of what we call an objective faculty which could start to function in respect to our life, and which then could give us information about the truth of what we are. If it could function in such a way <sup>so</sup> that that truth is without any further questioning – that it is the truth and nothing else but the truth, which means that I cannot argue about it and I don't have to think about <sup>it</sup> ~~it~~, and I don't have to like or dislike it, I just have to accept it for whatever it is – that would be then a so-called objective fact. And there is nothing in my personality or in all of my subjectivity anything in that what I have now which can operate in that way, that it could receive facts which are objective. And for that reason, one tries to imagine an 'I' to exist.

At the same time, how this 'I' is created is still a difficult question. Sometimes we say, we consider it "as if" in my imagination, as if it could start to function. And then when it is functioning, which I can also imagine, the fact then that it receives information about myself, that what is affecting the 'I' as receiving such facts will change the 'I' into an actual existence, because the facts themselves are actual.

That is one explanation. The other is a little different. I hope that when I start to think about myself, that when I want to create something that is as 'I', that I know that I need something for myself which can be objectively in existence. And I will not take on the task of

changing that over, but I wish that that what I can do, which is to make something like a container which could contain something objective, that is within my means. But for the possibility of making that entity alive, I need something else. If I want to put life in it for myself, I'm afraid that the life that I have is still subjectively tinted. And since the question of Work has to do with an inner prayer that one could become a right kind of a man – as Gurdjieff would call him a Conscientious man, or a man who is in equilibrium – I then, as it were, pray to God to give me life from above which then can be put into this container of myself and thereby create 'I'.

This 'I' then consists, you might say, of two things: one that I have furnished to the best of my ability, and which I call a shell or container; the other is a life force given by God which has a certain quality. It has in the first place the quality of an objective ability to observe. In the second place, I endow it, and I hope that in that light there will be the possibility of a faculty of benevolence.

Now I can ask this 'I' as an entity for which I am partly responsible in the creation of it, and partly dependent on powers from above, that that starts to function in an objective sense regarding myself, and the purpose is that I want to get facts which I can rely on. Now the question is why should I have these facts. Because in ordinary life I really don't need them. But you see, when we talk about the possibility of evolution for a man, we do not talk about a man as he is on Earth and has to stay there. We believe in the possible development, even if he lives on Earth, provided the man will know what to do, and that in that sense a man who wishes to Work is preparing himself for the possibility of life after his death, since he knows that the body itself is not sufficient. It cannot be continued after it has to die, but that that what encourages a body to exist is the life force within a man. And that there is a difference between this body as matter and the force or spiritual development, or the potentialities of man as he lives on Earth.

Now I try to understand what is really meant by that – if I consider the fact of something observing me and giving me then facts of my existence, which means that the fact of the recognition is that I am alive, since I manifest. It means that there is a life force within me which is

expressed through the behavior of my body. The 'I' is interested in the fact that I exist as life. It is not interested in any other kind of a fact, including if my body would have died. 'I' is not interested in that. It only is interested in life, because 'I' by itself represents life. How can I now reach an objective fact, and what is the reason that I need it? I want to build something that is now potential. And this potentiality when it could become actual is really not of this Earth.

Again, I have to explain that. The earth itself allows the development of a man up to a certain point only. It is for definite reasons that Mother Nature is not interested in our further development. We have a task to fulfill as humanity on this Earth. We have as the task to maintain the Earth for what it is, and to be used as a conversion machine for energy to continue the life force which is expressed as an involutionary law. Again, I have to explain that.

The totality of all life existing in the universe is expressed at certain points in the form of crystallizations. We call them stars, constellations, Milky Way, solar systems, planets, the Earth itself, and the different moons which are in existence around certain planets including the Earth. These are indications of forms of life in the universe, in a crystallized form in which there is activity, but not a quietness as it may seem. But there are currents which take place in each crystallization: one current indicating a desire for the maintenance of the universe as a whole. The other force indicates the potentiality for each crystallization to become the next crystallization in its development. This means that if we consider the Earth one of such crystallizations, there are two forces noticeable in the condition of the Earth. One we call the involutionary force, which is to provide sufficient energy for the maintenance of the universe as a whole, which for us ends in our moon, and which is indicative still as something existing on the other side of the moon which we cannot see, and which we call Anulios. Anulios is the so-called life-giving point of that current.

The other force exists in two ways. One is expressed in each man: in his wish for his own development, and his wish for freedom. In that way, he himself being subject to the conditions of the Earth and what is called 'natural,' and what is really a subjective element for each person, is



also subject to a potentiality if he knows how to make that actual for the possible development of himself, so that then in reaching his freedom he is equipped to live, as it were, to go over to a higher level of being. For us, the level of the planets is higher. On the planets, there is more freedom than on the Earth. On the sun, there is more freedom as compared to the planets.

Now our Aim, when a man lives on Earth and tries to become conscious – it is instigated in himself as a result of something taking place in him, which many times he does not know why. Sometimes it is because of suffering. Sometimes because he doesn't understand what it is all about and keeps on thinking. Sometimes in philosophy, he tries to gather together a great deal of knowledge and puts it together in order to derive as an insight of the being of things. Sometimes in science, he tries to uncover certain forces which govern particularly the biology of one's life, or that what exists as the potentiality in the development perhaps as a form of research, to find out really what is beyond all matter, and what makes it function the way it does. In another direction of art, it is always a question for each person to be able to create something which then could contain his life, and could<sup>be</sup>, which each artist must believe, have a more permanency than his ordinary physical being; and that ultimately, there are certain forms of art which have nothing to do with the expression of the artist, but which take on a description in certain forms about the totality of what we are capable of perceiving, and to which belongs a religious feeling and an understanding, you might say, of at least an aim for a wish to understand the universe, the skies, science and so forth – and including in that, music of a certain kind which has to do with the glory of the Lord.

All of that takes place in a man when he wants to consider the possibilities for his development. And then when he is convinced that it is necessary <sup>that</sup> or it is possible, then he must know that if – he has to know that is possible for him. So out of the hope which exists for the existence of that what could set him free, he has to change it into a belief in himself that he can do it. And then, he is hunting for the means of doing it actually; and because of that, in esoteric knowledge, a certain kind of knowledge is given to – imparted, as it were, for those persons who

wish to find a way out of their unconscious existence.

In that direction belongs the creation of 'I'. Because we believe that if such 'I' could function, it would actually become a guide, ultimately after enough objective data have been collected. Now the reason that such facts have to be objective is that what I wish to build should not be subject to the laws of the destruction of the Earth. I have to imagine, to some extent, that what I want to do with this kind of a building is to create a condition in which certain forms of life of a spiritual kind can continue to exist. And for that I need material which is not going to be destroyed in time. It may in time be destroyed as long as it still belongs to undeveloped levels of being. But I definitely would like to make something that will last longer than my body.

If I can find such facts which have a more permanent value, in the sense of time length, then it can function as a foundation on which I want to build – we call it certain 'bodies' which then can house life in a different form. In the Gurdjieffian sense, we call it a Kesdjanian body containing emotional energy, and a soul body containing intellectual energy or understanding. For that reason, the facts of my existence which an 'I' tries to give me when this 'I' is observing me, have to be more permanent than the ordinary facts of my life which I'm familiar with. And I give this 'I' instructions to observe me and to accept myself as I am, I mean by that, that I want to exclude all kind of personal interpretations. I would like such facts to be as absolute as I can make them.

With other words, it is really this: if I try to Work in a certain way for the accumulation of facts about myself, I do not know <sup>as yet</sup> enough as yet about the reality of such facts or that they are actually sufficiently reliable. That is, the reliable means that they will last longer and longer; that they if they could remain as facts, should live as long as time itself could live, or as life itself could live, and I would like to have them live eternally. In order to reach the next level where this particular condition could already exist in a different way from the condition of this Earth, I want these facts to be so reliable that nothing of my subjectivity can affect them. I say I don't want to have any feeling about them, and I don't want to have a judgment of liking and disliking them.

Moreover, I want those facts to be used for the building also of an intellectual body, and in that I want pure intellect to function. It means that I do not want associations to exist in accumulation of such facts. And I don't want to have any rationalization process.

This means that when this 'I' observes me, and wants to have a fact which is pure and correct and objective, this 'I' has to accept me – my body, my personality – as I am. And only the fact that I am. So when I say, "I want to accept myself as I am," I mean that 'I' only observes the fact of my existence as a living creature; and that I add even to this acceptance of myself the word "now" in order to indicate that I don't even want to be subject to the time which might even, in time, destroy me.

Now this is a very lengthy kind of explanation, but it belongs to a description of Work on oneself and I had to say it, because the question was about acceptance. I accept myself when I have absolutely no desire to describe it. When I have no wish for interpretation, when I want to have the fact of my existence exist as Being, without wanting to have anything to do with it regarding associations of the past, or indications of anything of the future. I want to have that fact by itself, for itself. I do not want any thought concerning such a fact which has to do with the past in the form of memory, or with anticipation in the form of future.

With other words again, I want such a fact to become timeless for me, because I know that time destroys me. If I could thereby be timeless, I can only conceive of one particular point where there is no time, or where time has stopped. Time for a man is like a current which flows through him. When it comes towards him, it is his future. And it gets closer and closer: as the future is near, time enters into a man and then at a certain point, without stopping, it leaves him. Then that time becomes past. Anticipation we describe with our thoughts. Memory, we describe with that what is recalled. The point in which, you might say, the direction changes between the anticipation and the memory, although it is continuous, at that particular moment there is no thought <sup>or</sup> ~~of~~ feeling about that moment, because it is in the process of changing the direction of time and the direction of perception. That moment we call the "now" condition of a man. And the

characteristic of that is, that it is for that one moment timeless.

For that reason, in Work on oneself, we talk about simultaneity. It means that that what is the observing process of 'I' is observed and registered at exactly the same time when the action or the object which is being observed happens to be observed. So there is no time length between that what takes place and what is recorded. And for that reason there is no chance <sup>of</sup> ~~for~~ any mental function to enter into that process.

Does that describe it a little bit?

Q: Yes, thank you.

MR. NYLAND: I don't want go to much in detail about Work, and what I have said already I'm afraid is a little bit too much. But you see, I do not know. I don't know where you are in your particular development, or at what particular stage you get stuck in your thoughts. I do not know what kind of questions you really have from which I could perhaps could learn what particular place you now have in regard to the changeover of one level of being to another. And therefore I still talk very much in a very general sense. It would help me if you tell me your questions – of what is really perhaps a stumbling block.

New male questioner: I have a question, Mr. Nyland. It's <sup>Wanna I?</sup> [.....].

MR. NYLAND: Yes.

Q: It's a question in two parts. First of all, why does my. . . why does my wish fluctuate? And secondly, is there anything in addition to Work, in ordinary life which I can do which would help me make my wish stronger or more constant?

MR. NYLAND: Let's take that first, that your wish. . .that your wish fluctuates, and that you want to make it stronger. Why do you think a wish exists [aside to another member: Thank you very much, I have some]. Why do you think a person should have a wish, or what is the reason for a wish?

Q: To Work.

MR. NYLAND: Yah. Something must precede that still.

Q: The realization of your level of being.

MR. NYLAND: Perhaps it should even be expressed as a motivation.

Q: Yes.

MR. NYLAND: When you have a motivation, you can have a wish for a change. The motivation will have to do with the description of your condition as you are. If that what you describe is an ordinary, unconscious description, and you see yourself once in a while in your behavior, and you have a certain judgment about it, that what you are doing, what you are thinking, what you are feeling, is not becoming to a man.

(Pause for turning of tape)

MR. NYLAND: You look at yourself; sometimes you study yourself. Sometimes other people tell you what you are. Sometimes you believe what you see; sometimes you don't. If you don't, you try to rationalize it away when it is something that is disagreeable to you, and as I say, it is

not becoming. Sometimes you are very fortunate that you can rationalize. But it may not change the reality of such a fact.

I'm interested in finding out actually what I am. So my motivation for wanting to Work is based on the description and a realization of a condition in which I find myself and which I then wish to change in a certain direction. I'm not quite clear what exactly that direction is, but I do have an aim, and sometimes within myself a description of what I would consider a more ideal man, and the hope that I, as a man now living, could reach that kind of an ideal, or that is an ideal for me, and it becomes mine. For that reason, I want to Work in order <sup>to have a chance</sup> to make the changes possible. If I go at it in an ordinary way, many times <sup>could</sup> I make a change in my behavior, but I do run a risk that I substitute another subjectivity for the first one, and in that process discover after some time that I've added something else to myself which I didn't want.

For instance, if I don't want to smoke, I can of course stop smoking. It might cause irritability in me. It might cause thinking about myself, nervousness that I cannot smoke, because of that I cannot do certain things. All forms of rationalizations for myself with which I can get away at times, are simply indications that I am what I am, but I don't want to see it. And the rationalization, as it were, puts me to sleep and I don't have to see it.

My motivation for wanting to Work is that I want to see all the facts in the way they actually are without any further interpretation or a chance to rationalize about them. I do this by means of the creation of something that is objective, as I explained a little while ago, and then make it function in observing me. All the time, the reason why I want to create that kind of a condition, and why I want facts about myself, is that I have the motivation for a wish to change. At the same time, I do not know into which I would want to change – because my thoughts and my feeling about that remain subjective, and I cannot describe what would be a real objective state.

At the same time, there is that wish. And I apply now this method, but I use the energy which comes from my wish and the motivation for that purpose. But I will not define what I want

to reach than only a state of being awake – meaning by that, that there should be a condition in which this ‘I’ is awake and gives me objective facts.

*is a very simple one.*

Now, the reason why I cannot be continuous, or where my wish is not always the same, I have at my disposal, each time that I happen to think or feel about anything, a certain amount of energy which comes from the state of my health, the condition of my body, the activity of my mind, and the range of my feelings. I’m limited in that amount. I bring food into me. I keep on breathing; I have impressions with my five sense organs. All of that is the continued giving of food to me. Still, I’m limited by my capacity. The food that I receive in those three forms are converted within myself into energies. Such energies have to be used for different purposes. One is the maintenance of my body and the different organs which are functioning in it. The second is, to create within me also a wish for a change. The third is, using such energy for the creation of ‘I’ and to receive information of a conscious nature. All three have to be attended to – if possible, parallel to each other, or simultaneously existing. And each, if my wish is correct, should have a share of the energy.

At times, one part in which the energy goes is more demanding than the other. Sometimes my unconscious state is so busy with thoughts and feelings that practically all the energy will go there. Very little is left for my wish even to be formed, or even to be given to the creation of a conscious ‘I’. At other times, I exclude that what I want to send for the maintenance to a minimum in order to have more energy available for my wish and the satisfaction of that. This is the reason that my wish is not always the same, because I as a personality am not the same. I may have the same capacity all the time, but I don’t have the energy all the time. Early in the morning, it’s different when compared with before lunch or after lunch. When I have many thoughts which occupy me, and perhaps thoughts of worry, or feelings of anger or of hate, or of destruction, or negativity – whatever it may be, all of that will determine how much energy I will use for the maintenance of my body in that kind of a condition, and as a result, that what is my wish logically is affected.

How to be able to make it more uniform, or to have it always available, or to deepen it? If I want energy for that purpose, my motivation has to be much stronger than it usually is. If I even say my wish for Work is such that I cannot live without it, and I mean it, I'm quite certain that I won't send any energy to anything that is superfluous. So if I want to deepen it, it depends entirely on what I consider myself to be and what I think I ought to become. And the more I consider myself incapable even of being in ordinary life what I should be, the more I would wish to become that what I am not now, and what as I say is more becoming to a man – that is, to become more harmonious, to have a consciousness, to have a conscience. That would be an aim.

Now I can help my wish for that by trying to obtain for that purpose energy which is not my own, but for which I can pray if I can establish a contact with a source of energy outside of myself, if I know how to reach it, and if I know how, as it were, to open the door. If I know how to pray to God, or if I know how I can make contact with certain forms of energies which are existing outside of the world, and in that process of such a wish, I can be sufficiently open to receive them, then I will be a different kind of a man with much more energy available for the purposes which I have in mind, which is to reach a higher level by using the energy which is now coming from a higher level in order to help me.

And you see, that's the process. The deeper I wish, the more I believe I need it, the more I realize that if I don't do this kind of Work, I will die – I don't mean physically – I will die in remaining unconscious, the more I will have a motivation and such a desire within myself, that I would say almost nothing is going to keep me away from that wish. And my wish will be deepened at any one time when I realize what my condition is. You see that?

Q: Yes, I think so.

MR. NYLAND: All right. (To another questioner): Yah?



New Questioner: I have a question on self-remembrance. Through my own experience and my own self-observation, I've come to the conclusion that I'm not one, I'm a multiplicity of various energies working through me, various prejudices, preconceptions, various types of trained, wrong education –

MR. NYLAND: You say it so glibly. You see, if you make a list of all these different things that you say you are, your observation process is not impartial. You understand that? You are just describing yourself. Work means, I observe myself, and the two attributes which are necessary are Impartiality and Simultaneity. When they are there, I will accept myself as I am, that I am, which I tried to explain as an acceptance. Then I'm not describing my self anymore. I take myself with all my shortcomings – all the evil wishes, all the meanness, all the good intentions – I take it for whatever it is, because I know at the moment when this 'I' observes me, this what I call my body is alive.

At other times, I can keep on thinking about what I am and give a full description of my personality. But unless all of that description is going to lead to my wish to Work, it's of no use to describe it. I describe it only when I want to use it in a subjective world – which of course is all right. For that we call it still an unconscious world. You talk too glibly about your process of self-observation. I hope you understand what I mean.

Q: Yes, I do. But I have a specific question that I don't understand regarding self remembrance. It's my understanding that for us to really begin to understand in a real way, not in a glib way or an intellectual way, our real position and the real – I suppose you could call – the terror of it, that you have to practice a certain amount of self remembrance. Now I've tried to think about that quite a bit. And I don't really understand what self you're supposed to remember. Because I can't see one thing in myself that is permanent enough to be able to remember.

MR. NYLAND: Do you think that a little baby has a Self?

Q: Well, possibly in potential. . .

MR. NYLAND: Why should it be in potential? It's an actual body –

Q: It's a body, but it doesn't seem to me to be the human being.

MR. NYLAND: Well, it has a little brain and a little feeling, and when it starts to grow, it has <sup>all</sup> the indications of a form of life.

Q: How about the psychic nature of that –

MR. NYLAND: The psychic nature is not necessarily an active life. It's an adaptation to the world.

Q: And it's trained by the world.

MR. NYLAND: Yes.

Q: But only–

MR. NYLAND: So the more, uh, uncontaminated a child is, the more life exists in its reality. It is not as yet written on. It is still white, blank.

Q: But what about us who are dirtied already.

MR. NYLAND: That is our problem. I'm asking you, do you think that Self exists in a baby?

Q: That I couldn't say, because I don't have any experience of that.

MR. NYLAND: Do you imagine – could you for a moment imagine that the Self exists, and we call it with a capital 'S', and that during the educational and growing up process, that capital 'S' changing to an ordinary 's'? So that when we now consider the question of self remembering, that perhaps there are two kinds. One is the remembering of the real Self, and the other is the remembering of that self which we are at the present time.

Q: Well how do we know what is the real Self?

MR. NYLAND: That is exactly the problem to find out what it is.

Q: Yes –

MR. NYLAND: By accepting the self with a small 's' for whatever it is, reaching then objective values, leading to objective wisdom, and in continuing to have such possibilities, you might say strung together, having a realization of what it is to lead an objective life.

Q: How is possible then to detach that thing from all the identifications with the little self<sup>and</sup> its various little wishes and –

MR. NYLAND: This is the difficulty for each man who wants to become conscious. How can he detach himself? Slowly and step by step by the constant introduction of that what is objective. Not by thinking about it. By actually putting that what he knows to practice. In the practice, one takes

that what one thinks about and what one feels into the realm of an activity of a physical body – which in turn can then affect emotions and also intellect, but the product of the three is a certain level of one's being. The more identified such activities are, the smaller the 's' is, and the smaller the 'b' of the being, the lower the level of the being. The more one tries to become objective in any one of such activities, the more the level of one's being is raised, and the more the little 's' will change into the real – uh, the real capital 'S'.

But you only will do it by application in the understanding of that what is now prescribed as an – let's call it an ordinary prescription – by doing that in the application and the physical, emotional, and intellectual, the observation process by 'I' giving you objective facts, and because of that, the ability of building certain things which are now potential, so that then the totality of oneself becomes as centers independent of each other.

Q: In other words, you grow by being burned by personal experience.

MR. NYLAND: You will only grow by experience. Of course it has to be personal. But the question of the experience is that I want to reach understanding instead of knowledge.

Q: Now, all day we're surrounded by the influences of life. Now how do we go about trying to bring down a higher influence –

MR. NYLAND: Have you listened to what I said a little while ago?

Q: I tried to, yes.

MR. NYLAND: About the introduction, or the first concept, and then the creation of an 'I'?

Q: I tried to.

MR. NYLAND: Well, then you have your own answer if you understood it.

Q: (unintelligible)

MR. NYLAND: It is exactly the 'I' that will start to function in an objective sense as against all the subjectivity of my personality. If this 'I' is able to continue to observe you, then there will be a chance that something is going to be built within yourself which has the qualities of your real Self, because it is objective and it is unspoiled. Do you understand those <sup>concepts</sup> ~~concerns~~?

Q: I think I understand something of it.

MR. NYLAND: I wish you would decrease your thinking, and increase your application. I'm afraid your mind is a little bit in the way.

Q: How can I go about removing –

MR. NYLAND: (laughter) Wait a minute. . . by not thinking about it. By just doing. Doing is an entirely different operation from thought.

Q: But if I understand Ouspensky, and what he writes –

MR. NYLAND: I don't understand Ouspensky at all.

Q: Well, we're told we cannot do, and I don't see that I can do –

MR. NYLAND: That's what he said. He says you cannot do. I don't believe him. Neither does Gurdjieff.

Q: What types of things can you do?

MR. NYLAND: Can't we?

Q: Can you do?

MR. NYLAND: For a man?

Q: Yes.

MR. NYLAND: He can learn how to observe.

Q: My experience has been, I set myself an aim, I'm going to observe myself –

MR. NYLAND: But you don't do it Impartially.

Q: But I'm not sure how you can start then, if you don't start someplace.

MR. NYLAND: You start at some place, definitely.

Q: Impartially you see something going on –

MR. NYLAND: No you don't. No you don't. If it is already something of that kind that you see

going on, you are not Impartial.

Q: Could you define for me then what it means to be Impartial?

MR. NYLAND: To accept a thing as it is, for whatever it is without description.

Q: So then it would be you know –

MR. NYLAND: Yourself.

(Silence)

MR. NYLAND: We will leave Ouspensky out, and just try to consider yourself. Don't accept the fact that Ouspensky says you cannot do it; you just go ahead and try.

Q: I still – I do not understand Impartiality. I can say. . . I think, without too much mental influence, that my experience has been that what I observe, what I see is not Impartial. And that the more I try to not be, uh, partial or biased, the more biased I become.

MR. NYLAND: That's right. Because the more you think, the further you get away from the particular fact. Impartiality is very similar to saying, "It leaves me cold." It is when something exists in which you have absolutely <sup>no</sup> ordinary interest. You don't care.

Q: In personality –

MR. NYLAND: Whatever it may be. I don't care how my arm looks, or how it behaves when I

move it. It is only a fact that it happens to move, which for me gives me a fact of my life. And that what I then notice, when it becomes Impartial, it is an Awareness of the fact that my arm exists.

All right?

Q: All right.

MR. NYLAND: It's too bad that you have to think about the problem of not to think. Let's leave it at that.

(Silence)

MR. NYLAND: Does that stop all thoughts?

(Group laughter)

MR. NYLAND: What has it to do with you? He happens to think in certain way. Does it intimidate you? Yah.

Q: I have trouble remembering the ideas of the Work during the day. In the morning I'm kind –

MR. NYLAND: Put them on a piece of paper and take it out of your pocket and read it, and then see if you remember it.

Q: It doesn't carry. . . I have phoned that –

MR. NYLAND: Have you done it?



Q: I have, and often I find that it doesn't carry the emotional impact that it should, and then –

MR. NYLAND: That's right, because you have no motivation at that time. You don't even consider your life. It's just a little habit. It doesn't go deep enough.

You have to realize what you are, before you wish to Work. If I'm stupid, and I consider myself stupid and I don't want it, I would try to be not stupid. But if I just say I'm stupid and let it go at that, I will remain stupid.

I said a little while ago that the motivation for Work has to come really from an entirely different aspect of oneself. Sometimes it can be explained as being incomplete. Sometimes that I have no control over what I am doing. Sometimes that I'm too thoughtful without wishing to do anything about my thoughts. Sometimes it is that I don't see any relation between my life and forms of higher life, or that I don't have any religious feeling, that I don't even understand what is meant by being a child of God. Sometimes it is that ~~it is that~~ I think a great deal of myself instead of comparing myself to a speck of dust.

Whichever the motivation may be, and whatever it is that you consider yourself to be, there has to be in you something of a wish – not only that you want to Work, but that you honestly and really WANT to Work. Not just superficially.

If I'm hungry, I will try to get something to still my hunger. If I drown, I will try every possible thing to save myself. If I wish to protect my life, I will go to any length to protect it. Even if you are sick, you will want to get well for what purpose? To continue to live on this Earth. Why? Because you have a desire to live. If one wants to Work on oneself, you will want to Work on yourself. If you want to develop your inner life, you will want to develop your inner life. You have to be quite serious about that. Otherwise, you have absolutely no interest in your life as a whole. You are superficial. If you care for Gurdjieff, it is really something that should engage you within your heart.

Sometimes, regarding the ideas of Gurdjieff, we talk a language which is not understood.

It is an “abracadabra.” There’s a very definite language that pertains to one’s emotional state. Fortunately, it has nothing to do with one’s intellect. It has to do with the feeling, of that what becomes more and more, awe for that what exists. And then the wish to understand that what exists first of an Earthly nature, then of a Sun nature, then what is a cosmic nature, then a universal nature, then what is the totality of finite things, and then why life is eternal, and why there exists Infinity. Those are simply little steps in order to get to something that really can engage one completely, wholly. And wholly, in the two senses of the word. A completeness, and a sacredness.

But if one talks that kind of a language, and you don’t know what I mean, of course it doesn’t affect you. Have you read “All and Everything?”

Q: Most of it.

MR. NYLAND: Have you read it three times?

Q: I’ve read certain parts of it more than that.

MR. NYLAND: You don’t do what Gurdjieff tells you to do. If you want to believe in an author, why don’t you follow his instructions? He tells you to read it from beginning to end: first time, second time, third time. Do it! If you really want to do it, do it. Otherwise, don’t think that you are doing anything in the direction of Gurdjieff.

Q: Can I ask you something about following Gurdjieff’s directions? I don’t remember which book it was in, but I remember reading that he disowned all his work – all his workers, all his people.

MR. NYLAND: True, isn’t that interesting?

Q: On what foundation do you stand?

MR. NYLAND: (laughter) I think it's a lie.

Q: You do?

MR. NYLAND: Of course.

Q: Why would he say that?

MR. NYLAND: Huh? He has never done it in my presence.

Previous questioner: It is in "All and Everything," "From the Author."

MR. NYLAND: Oh is it? Really.

Original Questioner: I think I read it, really. And I don't say more than I know; it's just that I'm curious about how you as a – as a teacher react to that?

MR. NYLAND: I wouldn't be sitting here if I didn't believe in it, hmm? So if he denounced it, even I won't denounce it. I think the validity of Gurdjieff is in the verification of one's own life.

Q: The what of Gurdjieff?

MR. NYLAND: Huh?

Q: Can you repeat, the what of Gurdjieff? I'm sorry, I didn't hear you.

MR. NYLAND: I don't know what you know about Gurdjieff.

Q: Well, not much.

MR. NYLAND: No, apparently not. Now, any other questions?

Q: Mr. Nyland?

MR. NYLAND: Yah.

*little bit*  
Q: Would you talk<sub>x</sub> about obligations? Our obligation to the Work, and also our obligation to our ordinary lives, to our families?

MR. NYLAND: I think that obligation is of course a result of a responsibility which one feels. I don't think in the beginning when one starts to live, there is much responsibility. Because much of that what contributes to our life is given to us. First father and mother, the general conditions, sometimes education, sometimes school. . . it takes a little while before one starts to work for a living. But I think that about approximately that time when one is more or less full grown physically, there also starts to exist a questioning attitude about the reason for one's life existing the way it is, and the place it has in general regarding the rest of mankind, or regarding that what is the nearness of family.

And then together with that, thinking about oneself being what one is, and the relations with other people, one takes on a certain responsibility – first, for the maintenance of oneself. Even if the reason why one is born is not always understood, and quite definitely, it's not the result of my wish. At the same time, considering my life and having impressions which make it worthwhile that I desire to continue to live, I take on the responsibility for the maintenance. With a further development of either the mind or the feeling, I start to include the relationships towards others, and I have an experience which I call caring. It is not exactly loving, but it is really to be concerned about something else, and usually about a life existing somewhere. Sometimes in the form of other human beings, sometimes animals, sometimes plants. Those are the things that I can see.

Then, there is added, with a further development of one's feeling and mind, a sense of awe regarding that what exists, an admiration for those things which we do not as yet understand, and which we must admit have a certain value. Together with that again, there is a wish for further understanding, and that we call simply "work" or research, or willingness to be more educated, or the search for discovery, or a wish for adventure. All of that, of course, makes a man as he is growing up. And now, considering himself as that kind of a person interested in the rest of the world, as it were, he starts to think about his relation to the rest of the world. Usually, if he can, he starts with that what is near to him, and also is dear to him. And he will take on responsibilities for the maintenance, in the first place from a selfish standpoint, because he feels he needs them, or he is happy when they are there. In the second place, from a more altruistic standpoint, by an understanding of the condition in which other people are, and to which I then would like to contribute for their sake. And whatever are the different feelings and the different reasonings for different persons, most of them will agree that it is really sinful, as we then call it, to kill anything of life which I am in contact with.

I cannot always keep that kind of a promise, because I kill many forms of life. I cannot

help it, or I don't think anything of it. When it comes to something that I want to kill because it threatens me, it sometimes is justified. And if it is not justified, there are enough people who try to justify it anyhow so they can continue to live with themselves.

The question of responsibility has to do with a condition in which one sees oneself behaving in a certain way, or having ~~certain~~ thoughts or feeling of a certain kind. And whatever that judgment may be that I say "This is right and that is wrong," and how that kind of a conscience based perhaps on certain ethical grounds is still in me, I really do not know. It depends a great deal on the culture and the civilization in which I happen to live. But there is also something within a man which is a little bit more permanent, and perhaps even a little bit more reliable. That is what I called a little while ago his real Self, which is buried. And then he has a desire sometimes to bring that to the foreground, because he has an instinctive feeling that that what then, if it could exist, could give him more direction for his life, and he would be willing then to follow it.

The responsibility now for that kind of life existing within a man, and which is covered up by different layers of education, and what we call simply an acquisition and an acquiring of ordinary characteristics – that is, the acquired characteristics as a result of living in an economic life, or a sociological one – is simply that he tries to distinguish more and more between that what is his sociological influence, that what is his astrological configuration at time of conception, and that what is the influence biologically expressed from his father and mother and previous generations. And he considers then himself, as it were, three-fold, in which the sociological influences become more and more superficial. His particular type, astrologically expressed, becomes really an essential quality. And that what comes from his father and mother biologically as a form of life is really that what is much more essential ~~essence~~ within him.

For all three, he starts to take a responsibility. But it starts to become necessary to see first what he can do. And now he must do first, and discharge the responsibility to those who are close

to him, because he may be immediately affected if they are not taken care of. Whatever it is as a family tie, I consider the family of an importance to each person, because in a family, one can learn really what one is by the criticism of others who care for one. That would be an ideal family, that if they – children, father, and mother – could actually see themselves the way they behave, and then tell what they think the others are, giving in a family the possibility of explanation and even of justifying themselves. The different ties which exist, of course, biologically among the members of a family are sufficient to keep them together. And together with that, there is a certain development of caring, and sometimes in the form of love.

What is really meant when the responsibility starts to extend in that direction, is that when one cares, one is really concerned about the condition of the person one cares for. When you care for animals, and cats and dogs and so forth, and horses, you take care of them to the best of your knowledge, and you create conditions for the existence for them to remain alive and healthy. Plants, they are <sup>not</sup>~~almost~~ the same way. Towards human beings, one tries to create conditions for another person in which they can grow up to the best of their ability and to their advantage, so that in really caring, there is no particular selfishness unless that what one wishes to become for oneself can be used for the possibility of giving that to someone else. And the definition of love is that I care for another to the same extent I would care for myself, in creating conditions which are right for my. . .

*(Tape runs off here)*

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